GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1988
ANSWERED ON:09.03.2016
Shortage of Scientists
Karandlaje Km. Shobha;Simha Shri Prathap

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country is suffering from an acute shortage of scientists and technologists and if so, the details of shortfall;

(b) the steps taken by the Government to create more institutions and strengthen facilities for higher education and research in the country and the likely gap in future;

(c) whether India has been able to create structure to nurture the innovation system at the grassroot level and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the National Innovation Foundation has been set up by the Department as an aided Institute to support grassroots technological innovations and outstanding traditional knowledge, and if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether the National Research Development Corporation is engaged in licensing, transfer and commercialization of technologies and innovations to enterprises and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DR. HARSH VARDHAN)

(a) No Madam. There is no shortage of scientists and technologists in various research institutions/laboratories under the various departments of the Ministry of Science & Technology in the country.

(b) Government has taken various steps to create more institutions and strengthen facilities for higher education and research in the country. It has established 5 Indian Institute of Science, Education & Research (IISERs) at Pune, Mohali, Kolkata, Bhopal and Thiruvananthapuram on the lines of Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore. In addition, Government has also established 11 new autonomous S&T institutions under the Ministry of Science and Technology to undertake research in new and emerging areas of S&T such as National Innovation Foundation (NIF), Ahmedabad; Institute for Advanced Studies in Science and Technology (IASST), Guwahati; National Centre of Molecular Materials (NCMM), Thiruvananthapuram, National Agri Food Biotechnology Institute, Mohali, Translational Health Science and Technology Institute, Faridabad, Regional Centre for Biotechnology, Faridabad etc apart from establishing Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), an autonomous body by an Act of Parliament to promote scientific research in all frontline areas of science and engineering to academic institutions, research laboratories and other R&D organisations. Government has also approved setting up of new IITs, IIITs and universities in various states of the country.

To strengthen facilities in emerging and frontline S&T areas in academic institutions, Government has launched various schemes such as Fund for Improvement of S&T Infrastructure (FIST), DBT- BUILDER (DBT-Boost to University Inter-disciplinary Departments of Life Sciences for Education and Research), Promotion of University Research and Scientific Excellence (PURSE) with special S&T packages to spread R&D base for North-Eastern Region, J&K and Bihar etc.

(c) & (d): Yes Madam. National Innovation Foundation (NIF), Ahmedabad set up by the Department of Science & Technology in 2010 has been providing support to grassroots technological innovations and outstanding traditional knowledge in the country. NIF, Ahmedabad has built a database of more than 2,25,000 technological ideas, innovations and traditional knowledge practices from over 585 districts of the country. It has recognised more than 775 grass root innovators and school students at the national level apart from providing help in getting thousands of grass root technologies validated/ value added. It has also set up a Fabrication Laboratory for product development apart from strengthening in-house research and development facilities for the initial validation of herbal technologies resulting in filing of over 745 patents on behalf of innovators.

(e) Yes Madam. National Research Development Corporation (NRDC) under the Ministry of Science and Technology is engaged in licensing, transfer and commercialisation of technologies and innovations to enterprises in the country. Over the last six decades of its existence, the corporation has forged strong links with large number of R&D organisations/universities/industry associations and has filed 1700 patents and signed 4,874 license agreements for transfer of technologies in different sectors.

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